

DoD CIVILIAN ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PERSONNEL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

WHAT IS A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT?

A demonstration project is the vehicle by which an agency or organization obtains the authority to waive existing Title 5 law and regulations in order to propose and test alternatives for its own personnel management system.

WHO AUTHORIZES A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT?

Public Law 104-106 gave the Department of Defense (DoD) the authority, with the approval of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), to conduct a personnel demonstration program for the civilian acquisition workforce. This demonstration project has the potential to be the largest, most unique project implemented by OPM--largest because of the number of possible participants; unique because it will apply to personnel across DoD components.

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT?

The purpose of a demonstration project is to determine whether a specified change in personnel management policies or procedures would result in improved Federal personnel management. This authority also supports acquisition reform. The demonstration project, which must be implemented by January 1999, provides DCMC a unique opportunity to practice streamlined personnel practices.

WHEN CAN A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT BEGIN?

A demonstration project may commence only after bargaining unit partnering, approval of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), OSD Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP), OPM approval of the project plan, publication in the Federal Register, public hearings, and proper notification of Congress and the workforce. OPM also requires extensive evaluation of the five-year demonstration projects.

WHAT CAN A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT DO?

Demonstration projects may suspend provisions of Title 5, or of any rule or regulation prescribed under Title 5 United States Code, that relates to: Recruitment, Appointment, Classification, Compensation, Assignment, Reassignment, Promotion, Discipline,

Incentives, Work Hours, Employee Involvement, Overall Staff Reductions, Overall Grade Reductions. Areas which cannot be suspended are: Prohibited Personnel Practices, Merit Promotion Principles, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), benefits, and leave.

IS THERE A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR THE DoD CIVILIAN ACQUISITION WORKFORCE?

Yes, on September 3, 1996, the Secretary of Defense, to implement public law 104-106, chartered a Process Action Team (PAT) to plan and develop the Demonstration Program for the DoD Civilian Acquisition Workforce. The PAT's core membership includes representatives from the military services and DoD agencies. The PAT developed a concept paper which provides a broad outline of thirteen proposed initiatives.

WHAT ARE THE INITIATIVES?

The initiatives, covered in the three categories of Hiring, Retaining and Shaping, are:

Hiring

- Eliminate Ceiling on High Grades and Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)
- Establish Simplified and Accelerated Hiring Authority
- Expand the Candidate Selection Process
- Reduce Appointment Authorities to Contingent and Permanent
- Establish Three Year Probationary Period

Retaining

- Establish Contribution-Based Compensation and Appraisal System
- Use a Simplified Classification System
- Establish Broadbanding
- Establish Rotational Billets across DoD Components

Shaping

- Modify and Simplify Reduction In Force (RIF) Rules
- Modify Priority Placement Program (PPP) for Internal Fill of Critical Acquisition Positions (CAP) within DoD
- Use Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)/Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) without linkage to RIF
- Provide Incentives for Mobility

The details for these broad concepts will be developed during Phase II which began in January 1997. During this phase, there will be continued coordination with bargaining units, OPM and OSD CPP before the first Federal Register publication. We intend to complete this phase by September 1997.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS?

The draft concept paper containing these initiatives was distributed to DLA field activities as well as providing it to attendees at the DCMC Worldwide Commander's Conference in November. We requested comments on these initiatives and an indication of interest in becoming a potential demonstration site. We will select demonstration sites during April 1997. If your organization has not indicated an interest in participating, but would like to, please contact Judy Carl at commercial (703) 767-2364 **by March 3, 1997**. Once sites are selected, we will partner with local bargaining units, gather workforce demographic data and begin the communication process with affected employees.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW IF MY CAO IS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

If you are considering participation, please keep in mind:

- (1) Partnering with your bargaining unit is essential.
- (2) Only civilian acquisition designated positions are covered. (The PAT is requesting legislative relief to cover **all** acquisition support positions in the organization, outcome is not known at this time.)
- (3) There will be costs associated with training, evaluation, conversion to broadbanding and automation.
- (4) This initiative must be incorporated into your budget and performance plan.
- (5) Extensive evaluation is required.
- (6) The workforce will require training.
- (7) Effective communication is vital.
- (8) The civilian workforce may be under two different personnel systems.

Also, be aware of what a demonstration project **won't** be or do:

solve non-system problems
all things to all people
easy or without costs
up and running quickly
have 100% buy-in or support
change mindsets

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Current information is available through the home page established by the PAT. The address is: www.crfpst.wpafb.af.mil/demo/homepage.htm. You may also contact Judy Carl, AQOJ, commercial (703)767-2364, DSN 427-2364, fax extension 2363 or email judy_carl@hq.dla.mil for further information.